

H.R. 4578 is ill-advised and short-sighted, and I urge my colleagues to defeat it.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT
GARY A. JACOBSON

HON. JOE SCARBOROUGH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young man who has dedicated his career to protecting the people of this great nation and ensuring the American way of life. This gentleman has distinguished himself as a diplomatic leader, a dedicated family man, and a decorated soldier in the United States Army. The man I speak about today is Master Sergeant Gary A. Jacobson, Liaison NCO of V (US/GE) Corps to II (GE/US) Korps.

Master Sergeant Jacobson was recently awarded the Bronze Cross of Honor of the Bundeswehr for his outstanding performance and his great service to the Bundeswehr. He is deserving of that honor because of his positive attitude, honesty, and dedication that goes above and beyond the requirements of his duty as a US Liaison NCO.

Mr. Speaker, these accomplishments only begin to describe the caliber of a man like Master Sergeant Jacobson. Thomas Jefferson once said that the greatest honor of a man is in doing good to his fellow men. Gary Jacobson has certainly lived by that axiom. If you ask his colleagues to describe him, you would hear words like honest, loyal, dedicated, courageous, honorable, hard working, and a true gentleman.

Master Sergeant Jacobson's dedication to his country serves as a model in the lives of the hundreds of soldiers who have served with him. Gary Jacobson is truly an inspiration to the men and women in uniform from North-west Florida and around the world.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ASTHMA
ACT

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the ASTHMA Act—Action Strategies To Help Millions of Asthmatics—on behalf of myself and my colleague from Texas, JOE BARTON. This bipartisan legislation, which is the result of months of research and preparation, will provide our nation with new tools to battle the epidemic of asthma that continues to affect millions of Americans—especially our children.

Asthma affects more than 14 million Americans, including almost 5 million children. Every year, asthma results in 500,000 hospitalizations and claims 5,500 lives. Since 1980, reports of asthma are up more than 75 percent. Tragically, the asthma-related death rate among children has risen equally fast. Asthma remains one of the leading causes of absenteeism from school and costs our nation more than \$6 billion per year.

Mr. Speaker, public health experts do not have all of the answers, but they know plenty.

We now have the collective knowledge and experience to help millions of sufferers control and manage their asthma. We can reduce absenteeism in school and the workplace, reduce costly ER visits and hospitalizations, and help millions of Americans live happier, more productive lives.

Earlier this year, the Daily News published an award-winning series of articles highlighting the asthma problem in New York City. The ASTHMA Act would go a long way to addressing those problems. It would expand federal asthma data collection efforts; promote new health guidelines on asthma prevention and treatment; educate the public about the dangers of asthma—and how to manage it; and improve the response of local schools and state children's health programs.

Our legislation is supported by organizations leading the battle against asthma, such as the American Lung Association, the Joint Council of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology, Mothers of Asthmatics, as well as pharmaceutical manufacturers and managed care plans.

Mr. Speaker, asthma is not a partisan problem. It affects Texans and New Yorkers, Republicans and Democrats, men and women, and our children. As a nation we can and should be doing much better. I invite my colleagues to join Congressman BARTON and me in our effort to help asthmatics lead healthier, happier, more productive lives.

DEATH OF MURIEL HUMPHREY
BROWN

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, Muriel Humphrey Brown's contributions to the state of Minnesota and the nation will always be remembered. Muriel was a truly wonderful human being and as the spouse of former Vice President Hubert Humphrey and then as a United States Senator herself, Muriel secured a significant place for herself in history. With genuine care and optimism, Muriel and Hubert exemplified the very best of what it means to be an American while helping others understand the importance of social equality and public service. Muriel's motivation to push forward during hard times taught the nation a valuable lesson; "we can do better."

Muriel Humphrey balanced her many roles with incredible success. She created a loving, sheltered home life for her husband and four children, to counteract the national publicity surrounding their political life. In addition, Muriel campaigned whole-heartedly and as a politician's wife, she conducted her public role with poise and dignity. Muriel assumed Hubert's United States Senate seat after his death in January 1978, making her the only woman in the Senate at the time and the first female Senator ever from the state of Minnesota. Admired throughout her life, Muriel remains a role model and inspiration for all of us.

After her marriage to businessman Max Brown in 1981, Muriel stepped away from the spotlight and dedicated time to herself and her family. Although she never again pursued a life in politics, Muriel continued to teach a valuable lesson to those around her about ad-

ressing national and international issues, without forgetting one's roots. The death of this courageous woman marks a significant loss for both the people of Minnesota and the nation. She will be deeply missed.

THE SENIOR CITIZENS
PROTECTION ACT

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a modified version of H.R. 4155, the Senior Citizen Protection Act. H.R. 4155 would expand the authority of state Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCUs) to investigate fraud and abuse beyond the Medicaid Program. H.R. 4155 would allow the states and their MFCUs to protect senior citizens by investigating all forms of health care fraud and empowering them to assist state and local authorities in investigations of abuse and neglect against residents in assisted living and other board and care facilities. This legislation would help Federal, state, and local officials crack down on rampant health care fraud and let each and every one of us feel secure that our loved ones are safe in their retirement years.

Legislation is necessary because current law prohibits Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCU) from pursuing Medicare fraud when it is uncovered through a Medicaid investigation. Many times, a MFCU referral to federal authorities does not result in investigation or prosecution. Also, MFCUs are prohibited from utilizing their resources and expertise to assist state and local authorities who are responsible for ensuring that patients receive quality care in assisted living residences and other residential care facilities.

After extensive conversations with the various stakeholders which could be affected by this legislation, I have made two modifications to H.R. 4155.

Today's bill modifies Section (2)(a) of H.R. 4155 by clarifying the authority between Federal officials and the MFCUs when the MFCUs decide to pursue an allegation of non-Medicaid fraud. Clearly, states should be empowered to pursue Medicare and other Federal health program fraud uncovered during a Medicaid investigation. However, this new provision would ensure that the inspector general of a federal agency which is responsible for eliminating Federal health care fraud retains the absolute discretion to take over the investigation and prosecution of the case. My expectation is that the HHS Inspector General and the U.S. Department of Justice will develop the appropriate protocols with the state Medicaid Fraud Control Units and the state Attorneys General to implement this legislation.

Today's bill also modifies Section (2)(c) of H.R. 4155 by clarifying the authority of MFCUs to investigate abuse in assisted living and other residential care facilities. Today's bill states that MFCUs may only investigate at the request of state and local agencies who have the current responsibility for ensuring quality care in such facilities under state law. The MFCUs have resources and expertise that clearly would benefit state agencies in the fight against abuse in senior's facilities. The cooperation and expertise of the MFCUs will